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ABSTRACT

Faced with a market that puts a premium on newness, artwork, and copyright date, the textbook industry seems to have been forced into a hectic textbook revision cycle in which improvement in instructional quality takes a poor second place to more superficial changes. While educators think they are getting newer, different, and, therefore better textbooks, they are not. An analysis of recent editions of four fifth-grade social studies textbooks reveals relatively few content and pedagogical changes. Of the four, only one can be said to have undergone substantial revision from one copyright version to another. On the whole, teacher's guides reflected the changes or lack of changes in their student textbooks. On the surface, it appears that publishers spend inordinate amounts of time employing marketing ploys to convince educators that they are buying something better than was previously available. Yet, it is educators themselves who apply educationally irresponsible and unsound criteria to their evaluations of textbooks. Adoption states, too, must bear a disproportionate responsibility for creating the existing market. Although efforts are being made to insist upon improved quality of textbooks and to reform the textbook selection process, much work is necessary to assure that these efforts materialize into substantial improvements and changes. (BZ)

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Old Wine in New Bottles:
An Analysis of Changes in Social Studies Textbooks from Old to New Edition

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Introduction

Not so long ago each Fall saw the annual ritual of an auto industry media blitz designed to persuade us that we really needed a new, improved, (and more expensive) car. Apart from the superficial changes that made these new cars seem sleeker and more desirable not much had changed. But, the auto industry in those days of cheap oil and easy money was assured that the millions of dollars it invested in retooled factories and advertising campaigns would be recouped by a public more concerned with style than substance.

Those days are, of course, long gone. As oil prices increased the expensive and wasteful ritual of the Fall introduction of a complete new line of models became a thing of the past. The auto industry changed course and while the advertising hype was ever present, new cars were promoted on the basis of their economy, gas mileage, and reliability. No longer was it necessary for companies to pretend to change all their models; in the face of a more sophisticated market, a new and more sensible equilibrium between producers and consumers had been reached that emphasized substance over style.

Unfortunately, the lessons learned by the producers and consumers of automobiles are not those learned by either the textbook industry or by the teachers and administrators who select textbooks. It appears that educators have fallen into the trap of equating new books with better books, with mistaking style for substance. And faced with a market that puts a premium on newness, artwork, and copyright date, the textbook industry seems to have been forced into a hectic textbook revision cycle in which improvement in instructional quality takes a poor second place to more superficial changes.

As research studies and anecdotal reports suggest (Farr & Tulley, 1985; Bernstein & Woodward, 1986; Dole, Rogers & Osborn, 1987; Courtland et al., 1983), aesthetic considerations and recency are key elements in deciding whether to consider a textbook for adoption. Indeed, from major adoption state to small school district, copyright date and design have become an easy and convenient device for eliminating textbooks from the adoption process. The consequences of using such "short-cuts" are, of course, serious. While educators think they are getting newer, different and therefore better textbooks; they are not (Woodward & Nagel, 1986; Woodward, 1986a). Publishers cut production corners in their haste to produce new editions of textbooks on an impossibly short cycle. In the end the instructional quality of textbooks is subverted by a market system that places importance on factors that have little educational value.

The Study

In the last several years, many publishers of elementary school social studies textbooks have adopted a two or three year cycle of revision. With attractive and clever covers, stunning artwork, and sporting a new copyright date, these textbooks appear fresh, exciting, and very different from their previous versions. However, as we describe below in our comparison of four most recently published fifth grade social studies textbooks with their previous copyrighted versions, we found major aesthetic and mostly minimal instructional changes in content between old and new editions.[1,2].

Four chapters whose topics were common to all the textbooks in the sample were identified. These topics consisted of the War of Independence/formation of the new government, slavery and the Civil War, industrial and agricultural development, and recent (and future!) history. Each chapter in each paired textbook was analyzed for changes in content, illustrations, maps and photographs, general instructional design such as blocking and headings, and student questions and activities. In addition, general changes in the layout and aesthetic design of the texts were noted.

In addition, each paired teachers' edition of the respective programs was analyzed to reveal differences in front matter material, program philosophy, teaching aides (such as worksheets), and specific lesson plans for the same four chapters between old and new editions.

The following system was used to categorize changes in text and illustrations. The categories for indicating text changes are as follows: "none" meant that there were no changes at all from one text to another; "minimal" indicated the addition or deletion of less than a sentence; "minor" meant the addition or deletion of up to two paragraphs; "major" indicated the addition or deletion or rewriting of sections (generally these represented 10% or more of the chapter). For illustrations, the category "none" meant that no changes had taken place; "minimal" meant the addition of color background to a chart or the change from black and white to color reproduction of an illustration; "minor" indicated the addition or deletion of two illustrations; "major" meant the addition or deletion of 10% or more illustrations.

Covers, Authors and Titles. The most conspicuous change in the textbooks we studied was in their covers (Table 1). In each case the new copyrighted edition sported a completely different cover. In two of the four textbooks in our sample the name of the textbook changed. For example, Publisher A changed the title of its text from Our History to America and Its Neighbors. The number of authors was stable between editions except in the case of Publisher A who added

four additional authors. Consultants, presumably people who commented on the text and provided geographical and ethnic representation, increased from 21 to 24 in the case of Textbook A and from 29 to 36 in the case of Textbook C.

Table 1

Changes in Title, Covers and Authors

Textbook	Title	Cover	Authors	Consultants
A 1983			1	21
1986	change	new	5	24
B 1984			4	6*
1986	no change	new	4	6*
C 1983			5	29
1986	no change	new	5	36
D 1985			4	1
1987	change	new	4	1

* "grade level contributors"

Text and Illustrations. As can be seem from Tables 2 and 3, three of the four textbooks exhibited few changes in text and illustrations. One recently published textbook (**Textbook D**) was entirely the same as its previous version except for cover and title. **Textbook B** showed minimal to minor changes in all but its chapter on the Civil War.

Table 2

Changes in Text

Textbook	Independence / New Gov't.	Slavery / Civil War	Industrial / Ag. Development	Present & Future
A 1986	none	none	none	major
B 1986	minimal	minimal	minimal	minimal
C 1986	major	major	minimal	major
D 1987	none	none	none	none

The extent of the changes in **Textbook B** were the addition of "Revolutionary War" to a sentence noting the various names used to characterize that period (War of Independence etc.). A print of cavalrymen fighting in the Battle of Cowpens replaced one of the British surrender at Yorktown (as the caption noted, this print had been done many years after the event). Minimal changes occured in the chapter on industrial and agricultural development. In the chapter on the present and future a full page photograph of the takeoff of the Challenger with an inset photograph of Kathy Sullivan replaced one of a shuttle sitting on a launch pad. A black and white "victory" photograph of Tony Anaya was replaced by a color portrait photograph (the caption remained the same).

Table 3

Changes in Illustrations

Textbook	Independence / New Gov't.	Slavery / Civil War	Industrial / Ag. Development	Present & Future
A 1986	none	minimal	none	major
B 1986	minor	minor	minimal	minor
C 1986	major	major	minor	major
C 1987	none	none	none	none

Only four text changes were found in Textbook B's chapter on the present and the future. For a new 1986 copyrighted textbook it seemed strange that it still included information about inflation- "Inflation continued to be a problem." But, given that this sentence was included, it was a pity that a explanatory sentence that followed in the previous edition was deleted, "Inflation happens when prices go higher and higher because money has less and less value." The reelection of President Reagan was briefly noted in a new sentence, "When President Reagan was reelected in 1984, he faced many of the same problems." In two cases the addition of a few words made the sentence more open ended, "In the 1980s there will be more elderly people..." ("1980s" was replaced by "future"), and " Isn't it interesting to think what the United States will be like in the 1990's," ("1990s" was replaced by "years to come").

Major changes were incorporated into the present and future chapter of the new copyright version of **Textbook A**. No other changes were found in the sample chapters, with the exception of the Civil War chapter where color was added to a chart comparing the resources of the north and south prior to the Civil War. The

section on space included new text describing Skylab and the shuttle program. Especially prominent was information about the first women and Black American in space. The section on disease included new text on organ rejection and artificial organs (along with a photograph of Barney Clark). The section on civil rights and equality contained major changes. Photographs were added of Martin Luther King, Jesse Jackson, and Ralph Abernathy just prior to King's assassination, Jackson campaigning for the 1984 Presidential nomination, "college commencement", Lt. Colonel Guy Bluford the first Black American in space, Sandra Day O'Connor, and Mayor Henry Cisneros of San Antonio, Texas.

The text additions in this civil rights section were upbeat and were reinforced by the photographs described above. In terms of Black achievement the text noted:

> In recent years, blacks have also gained important new political power. Black mayors head 30 of the nation's largest cities. Among the most important black leaders today are Mayor Thomas Bradley of Los Angeles, Mayor Andrew Young of Atlanta, Mayor Coleman Young of Detroit, Mayor W. Wilson Goode of Philadelphia, and Mayor Harold Washington of Chicago. Reverend Jesse Jackson was a candidate for the Democratic nomination for President in 1984. Jackson did well in several states, but he failed to win the nomination.
>
> One of the keys to black progress has been education. The number of black students attending college in 1975 was nearly four times as large as in 1965. By the early 1980's, the percentage of black high-school graduates going to college was about the same as that of white graduates.

While mentioning the failure of the ERA to be ratified the text was upbeat about the gains made by women:

> Women have made important gains in entering new careers. In 1950, only about 30 percent of American women worked outside the home. By 1980, more than 50 percent were part of the paid labor force. Many women have entered such fields as law, medicine, engineering, and government service. Nearly 1,000 women hold offices in state legislatures. More than 20 women serve in the House of Representatives. In 1981, Sandra Day O'Connor became the first woman Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

However, discussion of the status of Hispanic Americans was measured. While the section included additional text on the growing political power of this group and noted the election of Henry Cisneros, Tony Anaya and others, it also included the following:

> Hispanic Americans also face severe problems. About one in four Hispanic families lives in poverty. Many Hispanic workers are unskilled. Most are unable to find high-paying jobs. Many Hispanic children must drop out of school to help support their families.

The section on future challenges included the energy crisis (two short paragraphs were added on solar and geothermal energy), pollution (no changes were noted), the economy and political action, and foreign policy. Foreign policy was a completely new section and covered El Salvador, the invasion of Granada ("Some felt the use of force was unnecessary. Many, however, supported the successful action of the President"), and tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, highlighting the incident in which a Korean airliner was shot down;

> Tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union increased during the early 1980's. In 1983, the Soviet Union shot down a civilian Korean airliner. There were 60 Americans aboard the plane. The airliner had flown into Soviet air space by mistake. In 1984, the Soviet Union refused to send its athletes to the Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.

A paragraph on Lebanon was also included and shows the difficulty of trying to deal with a complex subject in six (text) lines;

> In the Middle East, United States Marines were sent to Lebanon. Lebanon had long been torn by bitter civil war. The Marines were sent to help keep the peace. In October 1983, 240 Marines were killed by a powerful bomb at their headquarters. Soon the remaining Marines were pulled out of Lebanon.

Clearly, this paragraph left much unsaid. However, one must infer from it that the "remaining Marines" pulled out of Lebanon because of the bombing of their headquarters.

The 1986 edition of **Textbook C** contained major changes over its previous copyright version. All chapters, except industrial and agricultural development (which showed only minor changes) had undergone major revision. Most notable were the inclusion of additional text, the rearrangement of previous text into special sections, new photographs and illustrations, the substitution of black and white illustrations for color illustrations, and the addition of extensive captions to accompany illustrations. For example, in the 1983 edition a caption accompanying a somewhat romanticized print illustrating the quartering act (a young women was inside the arms of a man outside of their English-country-like cottage) stated "The Colonists objected to British troops being quartered in their homes." This was substituted by the following;

> The British were very angry about the Boston Tea Party. parliament passed laws to punish the people of Massachusetts. It closed the port of Boston to all ships. It forced colonists to quarter British troops in their homes. The Americans objected greatly to this practice. This scene shows a family grieving as troops take over their house. These new laws made many colonists turn against the British.

A substantial amount of text (some 139 lines) was added to the chapter on the War of Independence, describing in detail the events of the War and its settlement with the Treaty of Paris. However, mostly 1983 copy was used to create a special section on leaders of the revolution (several new color portraits were added).

It was in the chapter on the Civil War that changes from old to new editions produced a less satisfactory coverage of this particularly important topic. Notable was the replacement of two black and white prints, one depicting the squalid living quarters of slaves as they relaxed during some rare free time; the other a grim slave auction. The new illustrations, both in color, gave quite different impressions of slavery. The one that depicted slaves at leisure was a romanticized Corot-like painting. The one of a slave auction showed a rather jolly gathering with the women slaves dressed in nicely starched white aprons and gingham gowns.

While there was major rearrangement of text (special sections were created featuring William Douglass, Sojourner Truth, both with about 50% new text), there were major deletions too. A paragraph on Benjamin Bannaker was deleted along with mention of his correspondence with Jefferson regarding the exclusion of Black people from the Declaration of Independence;

> Benjamin Banneker was the first Black to receive a Presidential appointment. He was appointed to survey Washington DC, by President Washington. Banneker wrote to Thomas Jefferson in the 1700s. He asked Jefferson how he could have written the Declaration of Independence and still own slaves.

Also deleted was a photograph and powerful quotation from W.E.B. DuBois;

> "To white Americans, everything black seemed ugly. Everything Negroes did was thought wrong. If they fought for freedom, they were beasts. If they did not fight, they were cowards and born to be slaves. If they stayed on plantations, they loved slavery. If they ran away, they were lazy loafers. If they sang, they were silly. If they frowned or complained, they were trouble-makers.

> It was said that blacks were not smart enough to be educated. And it was said that free, educated black citizens and voters were an even worse problem. Equal education and job opportunities for blacks would lead to social equality. It was said that this would lead to a mixing of the white and black races. And this, it was said, would be the ruin of civilization."

Minimal changes in text were found in **Textbook C's** chapter on industrial and agricultural development. However, this chapter contained an interesting example of the apparent policy of substituting color illustrations for previous black and white ones whenever possible, even at the risk of substituting a less instructionally enriching photograph. In this case a black and while photograph of New York's Flatiron building under construction amid the hurly-burly of urban life, was substituted by a color painting showing a static scene from which nothing could be learned.

The chapter on the present and future contained major deletions. In the section on civil rights a photograph of Rep. Garcia was deleted and that of Mayor Cisneros added. An official portrait of California Secretary of State March Fong Eu replaced a more informal one.

While a special one page section about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was added to the 1986 edition, the treatment of women and civil rights tended to emphasize the upbeat. The following was deleted from the 1983 edition;

> There were also many injustices in the way women were treated in the United States. They were often denied jobs just because they were women.

Whereas the following was added in the 1986 edition;

> In the 1980s, women achieved important firsts in national leadership. Sandra Day O'Connor was appointed to the Supreme Court. Geraldine Ferraro was the Democratic Party candidate for Vice president in 1984.

The section on world conflict in the 1986 edition eliminated a paragraph describing President Carter's advocacy of human rights, as well as a photograph of Carter, Sadat, and Begin at the Camp David peace talks. A paragraph on Central America and a photograph of soldiers in El Salvador was alsc [illegible]ed.

The section on space was updated to emphasize the space shuttle program and photographs of Astronauts Ride and Bluford (the first American woman and Black in space) were added.

In the section on the future, the bicentennial theme and honesty in government (i.e. Watergate) were completed eliminated. Major deletions occurred in sections

on the environment and economic problems, Thus, two well written explanatory paragraphs on productivity, investment and saving were eliminated in the new edition;

> One of the main reasons that productivity has not been increasing has been a lack of investment. **Investment** takes place when companies build factories and buy new machines. The money for investment comes from **savings**. These are funds that people set aside for use in the future. Recently, companies have not been building many factories or buying many new machines. Workers have had to make goods in old factories with old machines. These old factories and machines are less **efficient**. That means that they produce fewer goods or cost more to run. Workers who use them have lower productivity. There has also been less investment because Americans have been saving less. There has been less money available for companies to borrow and use for investment.
>
> Productivity, investment, and savings have fallen in the United States. But they have risen in other countries. Japan is using new factories and machines to produce goods very efficiently. American companies have lost sales to the Japanese around the world and even in the United States. To remain strong, the American economy must meet this challenge from other nations.

In the place of these two paragraphs was one on the deficit. This followed a bare-bones discussion of inflation and productivity.

A new section on the American people was added, emphasizing democracy and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Accompanying these section were two photographs; one of two women signing, and the other of two girls playing with another girl who was in a wheelchair. The caption read, "People with disabilities can live active lives. *Left:* These women are using sign language to communicate. *Right:* How are these children communicating?"

Teachers' Guides. Given that the majority of the sample chapters in textbooks A, B, and D showed little or no changes from one copyright to another, it was not surprising that teachers' guides also contained few changes. In one case (**Textbook D**) no new teachers' guide was available to accompany the 1987 textbook revision. The publishing company's representative noted that the 1985 teachers' guide could be used with the 1985, 1986, or 1987 textbook editions (we did not know a 1986 edition existed). As our analysis showed there were indeed no changes in the 1987 textbook edition when compared to the 1985 version that would have necessitated changes in the teachers' guide.

The teachers' guide of **Textbook B** contained minor changes, ranging from the substitution of black dots for dark blocks in the scope and sequence chart, changes in the listing of supplementary materials, new and more colorful maps in the Atlas section, an enlarged glossary (one page added), and a reduced index (one page deleted). The lesson plan for the chapter on agricultural and industrial development added a two sentence explanation on the Bessemer process, and a question was added to the lesson plan of the present and future chapter.

With the exception of the front matter (where five pages of artwork were eliminated), the chapter on the present and the future, and mention of the availability of worksheet pages, no changes were found in the teachers' guide of **Textbook A**. However, teaching plans did differ in the final chapter and reflected the additions and deletions of content in the student text. Usually new discussion questions were added to cover new material.

The 1986 teachers' guide of **Textbook C** contained extensive changes when compared to the 1983 edition. A much greater emphasis was placed on skill acquisition and, in contrast to the earlier teachers' guide, each skill (map and globe; chart, graph, and diagram; time-related; reading, writing, study, and research; thinking; and citizenship and social, skills) subsumed as many as 21 separate subskills under them. Gone was the emphasis on "knowledge objectives" that stressed the understanding and awareness of concepts such as historical change etc. Also eliminated was the inclusion of page citations to skills in the scope and sequence chart. In their place were red dots.

A number of changes were noted in teaching plans. Unit plans were expanded in the 1986 edition and contained a "purpose" statement, "tested unit objectives," and bibliography (unannotated). The chapter plans were not significantly different from those in the previous edition, except that a "teaching page" containing skills to be developed and reduced-size blackline masters, were added.

The lesson plans of the 1983 edition included objectives, time allotment, resources, background information, reading and writing skills (very much mis-named since this section simply listed vocabularly words for the teacher to introduce and discuss with the class), strategies, activities, and answers to the lesson review questions. The 1986 edition presented the same lesson objectives, but changed their tone from "students should be able to..." to "students will be able to...". The background sections included some additions and the activities section was greatly expanded to include activities designated "whole class," "remediation," and "enrichment." Additions were also made in the "margin questions" intended to help the teacher guide the lesson.

Conclusion

As we have detailed above, our analysis of the most recent and next-to-most recent editions of four social studies fifth grade social studies textbooks reveal relatively few content and pedagogical changes. Rather, when changes occured, they were mostly aesthetic changes; covers were redesigned, more color photographs added, tables were blocked in contrasting color, and so on.

Of the four paired textbooks analyzed only one can be said to have undergone substantial revision from one copyright version to another. Of the remaining three, one had no changes in content at all, another had only minor changes, and in the third major changes occured only in the final chapter on the present and the future. As Tables 2 and 3 showed most of the chapters in these textbooks exhibited no, minimal, or only minor changes, and so cannot be considered significantly "different" from their previous versions.

Textbook C did undergo major changes between one copyright and another. However, these changes were judged to be equivocal in terms of improving its instructional quality. While sections and captions were added (a particularly notable and important improvement) there was quite a lot of rearrangement of existing text into new sections and/or special sections. This textbook in particular suffered from an over-concern with "aesthetics". Wherever possible, color illustrations were substituted for black and white ones-- usually of the same event or person. As noted above, in two cases new illustrations of slavery were extremely poor choices. Although these new illustrations were very nice pieces of art, they conveyed the wrong "message" about the phenomena they attempted to depict.

In both final chapters of Textbooks C and A there was a tendency to accentuate the positive, as in the case of the achievements of women and minorities.

The deletion of content in both Textbooks C and A was, in some cases, unfortunate. For example, not only did Watergate disappear, but content explaining various economic phenomena did too.

On the whole teachers' guides reflected the changes or lack of changes in their student textbooks. Notable was the comprehensive nature of these guides. As Woodward, 1986b; Woodward, 1986c; and Shannon, 1987, have noted teachers' guides often try to provide for every teaching eventuality and attempt to be useful for the inexperienced or unprepared teacher as well as the experienced and outstanding teacher; these teachers' guides were no exception.

It is easy to deplore the irrationality of a system that encourages the investment of vast amounts of time and money for such minimal educational improvement and to wonder at the state of affairs that brought this situation about. On the surface, it appears that publishers spend inordinate amounts of time employing crude marketing ploys to convince educators that they are buying something better than was previously available. Yet, it is educators themselves who apply educationally irresponsible and unsound criteria to their evaluations of textbooks. An irresponsibility, incidentally, that they would never show when buying a new car.

While all educators must shoulder some of the responsibility for creating the existing market, the adoption states must bear a disproportionate responsibility. For while the system of state adoption was originally introduced to ensure that minimum instructional, curricula, price, and physical standards were met, in these same states recency of copyright date is used as an initial and badly faulted filtering device.

Although efforts being made to insist upon improved quality of textbooks and to reform the textbook selection process, much work and "watchdogging" are necessary to assure that these efforts materialize into substantial improvements and changes (Woodward, 1987). For, ironically, while the last few years have seen a growth in research on factors affecting the instructional quality of textbooks and the political economy surrounding textbook publishing, there seems little evidence that selection practices have fundamentally changed.

Notes

1. We had originally intended to analyze the paired textbooks of a fifth publisher. However, in this case the most recent text was a completely new book with new authors, content, and illustrations. We also learned that as a result of the merger of two publishing houses this particular book would no longer be available.

2. This does not mean that chapters were not added or eliminated from the end of the book. For example, the addition/deletion of a chapter on Canada or Central America was not uncommon. In the case of these additions, unless teachers deliberately jumped to "the back of the book", we could not see how this content could be covered in a school year given the length of these textbooks.

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